

K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services

DEFINITION

K-12 students receiving special education services is the percentage of students in grades K-12 who received special education services in Rhode Island public schools or who were placed in private special education programs by their district of residence.

SIGNIFICANCE

Early and accurately targeted special education services help students with developmental delays and disabilities improve their academic outcomes and prevent grade retention.¹ Approximately 17% of U.S. children ages three to 17 have a developmental delay or disability. Children in low-income families, children with non-college-educated mothers, children with rural residences, children with low birthweight, and boys are more likely to have a delay or disability.²

The federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* guarantees a free appropriate public education to every child with a disability. Prior to passage of the original 1975 federal law, many children with disabilities were excluded from public school. Since passage, outcomes for children with disabilities have steadily improved. More students with disabilities are being educated in neighborhood schools, included in general education classrooms, reaching proficiency standards, graduating from

high school, enrolling in postsecondary education programs, and becoming employed as adults.³ Concerns remain that not all children who could benefit from services are identified, that Children of Color are less likely to receive special education services than their white peers, and that special education funding is not adequate.⁴

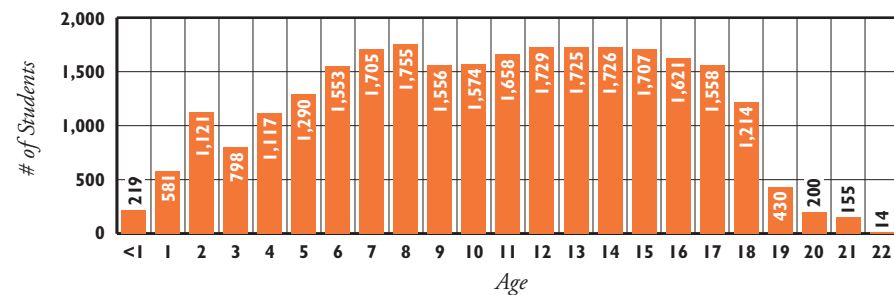
Despite improvements in high school graduation rates and postsecondary school enrollment, students with disabilities are still less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to be suspended than students without disabilities.^{5,6} Nationally, 65% to 75% of juvenile justice-involved youth under age 18 have mental, emotional, behavioral, and/or physical health problems and 33% qualify for special education.⁷

In Rhode Island, students with disabilities are much less likely to meet or exceed expectations on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*. In 2022, only 10% of third graders with a disability met or exceeded expectations in ELA and 12% in math, compared with 42% in ELA and 40% in math for students without special education needs.⁸

In Rhode Island, the four-year graduation rate for the class of 2022 was 66% for students receiving special education services, compared to 87% for students not receiving these services. Some students enrolled in special education may take additional time to graduate.⁹



Students Ages Birth to 22 Receiving Early Intervention and Special Education Services, Rhode Island, June 2022



Source: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Center for Child and Family Health, Early Intervention enrollment, June 30, 2022. Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Diverse Learners, Special Education Census, June 30, 2022. Includes parentally-placed students.

- ◆ As of June 2022, there were 22,165 students in grades K-12 (16% of all kindergarten through grade 12 students) receiving special education services through Rhode Island public schools. Thirty-six percent of these students had a learning disability, 19% had a health impairment, 12% had a speech/language disorder, 11% had an autism spectrum disorder, 8% had a developmental delay, 7% had an emotional disturbance, 4% had an intellectual disability, and 3% had other disabilities.¹⁰
- ◆ Students in core city school districts were more likely to be receiving special education services (18%) than those enrolled in the remainder of the state (16%), public charter schools (13%) or state-operated public schools (13%).¹¹
- ◆ As of June 2022, 72% of students ages six to 22 receiving special education services in Rhode Island were in their regular classroom for 80% of the day or more, 21% were in their regular classroom for less than 80% of the day, 5% were in a separate school, 2% were parentally placed in a private school, and <1% were in a residential facility, a correctional facility, were home-bound, or were hospitalized.¹²
- ◆ Of students ages six to 22 receiving special education services in June 2022, 66% were boys, 34% girls, <1% identified as another gender, and 2% were Asian, 10% Black, 29% Hispanic, 1% Native American, <1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 6% Two or more races, and 52% white. The majority were low-income (55% receiving free or reduced-price lunch) and 13% were Multilingual Learners/English Learners.¹³

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Table 44.

K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services by Primary Disability, Rhode Island, 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER	DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY	EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE	HEALTH IMPAIRMENT	INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	LEARNING DISABILITY	SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT	OTHER	TOTAL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	% STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION
Barrington	3,342	55	*	51	93	*	105	43	15	380	11%
Bristol Warren	2,890	53	16	22	70	16	175	116	*	479	17%
Burrillville	2,073	43	20	17	49	18	162	30	*	348	17%
Central Falls	2,556	42	83	13	75	28	200	25	18	484	19%
Chariho	3,080	63	44	21	84	*	165	36	16	437	14%
Coventry	4,224	96	42	61	142	40	219	76	15	691	16%
Cranston	10,163	209	76	94	368	47	591	119	36	1,540	15%
Cumberland	4,605	123	40	42	60	26	239	95	52	677	15%
East Greenwich	2,503	50	37	*	77	13	85	29	*	299	12%
East Providence	4,902	117	82	89	203	39	301	101	20	952	19%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,484	35	15	*	38	*	59	17	*	180	12%
Foster	208	*	0	0	*	0	*	11	*	29	14%
Foster-Glocester	1,381	16	0	*	26	*	52	*	*	118	9%
Glocester	557	*	*	*	12	0	14	34	*	77	14%
Jamestown	425	*	*	*	23	*	24	12	0	82	19%
Johnston	2,963	69	57	20	117	26	216	45	24	574	19%
Lincoln	3,192	85	36	43	78	12	186	53	12	505	16%
Little Compton	193	*	*	0	11	*	18	*	0	41	21%
Middletown	2,031	39	42	39	82	18	109	37	14	380	19%
Narragansett	1,134	15	*	*	33	*	66	19	*	156	14%
New Shoreham	129	*	*	*	*	0	*	*	0	21	16%
Newport	1,944	52	20	31	24	28	147	23	11	336	17%
North Kingstown	3,794	54	34	31	90	*	165	92	14	488	13%
North Providence	3,417	82	44	45	80	26	237	94	21	629	18%
North Smithfield	1,575	23	24	14	32	*	104	27	*	236	15%
Pawtucket	7,972	145	161	73	296	47	629	127	30	1,508	19%
Portsmouth	2,204	37	19	21	83	*	89	54	13	324	15%
Providence	21,438	284	310	226	608	189	1,314	435	109	3,475	16%
Scituate	1,183	15	*	*	29	*	66	29	*	159	13%
Smithfield	2,347	58	20	14	65	*	123	31	11	330	14%
South Kingstown	2,559	48	13	16	97	16	110	36	11	347	14%
Tiverton	1,648	38	27	24	55	13	96	26	*	287	17%
Warwick	7,970	184	173	85	277	55	474	123	33	1,404	18%
West Warwick	3,466	90	74	76	141	35	223	70	12	721	21%
Westerly	2,305	48	57	26	85	*	90	44	17	376	16%
Woonsocket	5,573	165	114	130	343	79	415	176	28	1,450	26%
Charter Schools	10,495	79	110	57	258	25	567	266	19	1,381	13%
State-Operated Schools	1,810	*	*	22	47	*	67	11	70	227	13%
UCAP	127	0	0	*	*	0	13	0	*	21	17%
Department of Corrections	NA	0	0	*	*	0	*	0	0	16	NA
Four Core Cities	37,539	636	668	442	1,322	343	2,558	763	185	6,917	18%
Remainder of State	85,891	1,821	1,050	917	2,637	514	4,722	1,532	410	13,603	16%
Rhode Island	135,862	2,544	1,829	1,450	4,272	883	7,930	2,572	685	22,165	16%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Office for Diverse Learners, Special Education Census June 30, 2022. Data do not include parentally-placed students. The denominator (number of students) is the "resident average daily membership" (RADM) for grades K-12 in the 2021-2022 school year provided by RIDE.

Due to changes in methodology, *K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services* in this Factbook cannot be compared with Factbooks prior to 2015. Data about preschool students receiving special education services can be found in the *Children Receiving Preschool Special Education Services* indicator.

* Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

NA indicates that no data are available.

Totals of students and percentages of students receiving special education may not sum due to rounding.

The category "other" includes students who are visually impaired, hearing impaired, deaf/blind, multi-handicapped, orthopedically impaired, and/or have traumatic brain injury.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools include Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette High School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Providence Preparatory Charter School, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, SouthSide Elementary Charter School, The Compass School, The Greene School, The Hope Academy, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and Village Green Virtual Charter School.

(continued with References on page 189)